

MATERNITY BILL, SAVING CHILD LIFE, SURE TO BE A LAW

Municipalities Get Power to
Appropriate Money for
Noble Welfare Work.

CARE FOR THE MOTHERS

Astounding Figures Show Ne-
cessity of Law to Con-
serve Future Citizenry.

By Sophie Irene Loeb.

One of the few welfare measures which will doubtless go through the Legislature and will be signed by the Governor, is the pre-natal and maternity bill, which was introduced by Assemblyman Theodore Stitt, and which has been urged by this newspaper among its various activities in the behalf of the little citizens of the future—the children.

This measure was to have been introduced by former Assemblyman Theodore Roosevelt, and has been considered favorably by many legislators. It is also endorsed by Herman M. Riggs, State Commissioner of Health.

Mr. Roosevelt, having accepted the post of Assistant Secretary of the Navy, asked that Mr. Stitt introduce the statute, with which he is heartily in accord.

Mr. Stitt will now father the bill

through the House, and it is believed there will be little opposition to it.

The bill directs public attention to the high death rate among children because of the destitution of mothers and lack of knowledge during childbirth. It sets forth that "the authorities of any municipal corporation charged by law with the duty and power of making appropriations may, in their discretion, appropriate moneys for pre-natal care and maternity protection and may prescribe by whom and under what terms and conditions such money shall be expended."

It is most likely the Governor will be favorable to this welfare measure, as is evidenced by his speech made before the League of Women Voters, in which he said: "With regard to true welfare, the protection of maternity, there can be little division of opinion."

Among the leading spirits behind the bill is Mrs. Meredith Hare, whose work on the Executive Committee of the Maternity Centre Association is well known. This organization has carried on the Maternity Centre as a private enterprise, but the volume of work developed and thrown on this association, which is perhaps the largest in the world of its kind, has made it necessary that the State now assume its proper share of the vital movement in saving children.

In this connection Mrs. Hare points out that in the State of New York in 1919, 1,269 mothers died from causes incidental to childbirth; 18,753 babies died under one year of age, and there were 9,339 stillbirths, and the 1920 statistics, though still incomplete, show these mortalities to be on the increase.

Also it is shown by the highest medical authorities that, through proper pre-natal and maternity care given in cities, 60 per cent. of the mothers may be saved, 50 per cent. of

the babies, and stillbirths reduced 50 per cent.

Congress is considering the matter with a view to appropriating funds and a favorable report has already been made by a Congressional committee.

The State efforts, however, should go forward without any further delay, said Mrs. Hare, to-day. "The measure is not mandatory, but permits the authorities to aid this most worthy cause. As an evidence of the volume of work already done from January to September of this year, nearly 10,000 patients were reported for care. Approximately 45,000 visits were made to the homes of patients, 18,000 visits were made by patients to the Centres, which now number twenty-six. Thirty-four durnes are on constant duty."

The following figures speak for themselves, showing just what has been accomplished in this maternity work. Prior to the work of the Maternity Centre, 12,637 babies under one year of age died in New York City in 1918. Thirty-five per cent. of those died as the result of conditions arising before birth or accidents at birth, mostly preventable; 5,818 babies under one month of age died in New York City in 1918. Seventy-five per cent. of these died as the result of conditions arising before birth or at birth, largely preventable. The number of stillbirths reported in New York City in 1918 was 6,793. This association operates nine out of every ten zones in Manhattan.

TELEPHONE CO. ATTACKS WRIT

Asks for Vacation of Injunction
Against 28 Per Cent.
Increase of Rate.

The New York Telephone Company applied to-day to Justice Newburger, in chambers, for the vacation of the injunction obtained last Friday by Corporation Counsel O'Brien halting the operation of the proposed 28 per cent. increase in telephone rates until the legality of the Public Service Commission's order is determined. The company, which evidently desires to put the

increase legally on the April 1 bills, contended that the injunction granted by Justice O'Connell had been improperly obtained. It held that the Public Service Law provides that no order staying or suspending rates shall be made until notice be given to the defendant company and a hearing held.

The company does not object to a legal testing of the order to show cause, but it does object to the granting of the Corporation Counsel's application without due notice and argument by the company.

Justice Newburger reserved decision, saying that he thought the company should not be prohibited from enjoying the temporary increase, at least until

Wednesday, when it will be heard in argument on the order before Justice O'Connell.

Mrs. Tartone Now Seeks Arrest of Artist-Husband.

It is for that in the Tartone family these days. Mrs. Claudia Tartone came to the West Side Court to-day and obtained from Magistrate McGuire a summons for her husband, Pierre, the artist, charging him with unlawfully withholding her property. On March 15, Pierre, in the same court, got a summons for his wife, charging her with disorderly conduct. He did not appear against her and the case was dismissed. Mrs. Tartone gave her address as No. 180 Fifth Avenue. Her husband lives at No. 200 West 27th Street.

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